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Yemen (San'a')

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY

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Armed Forces

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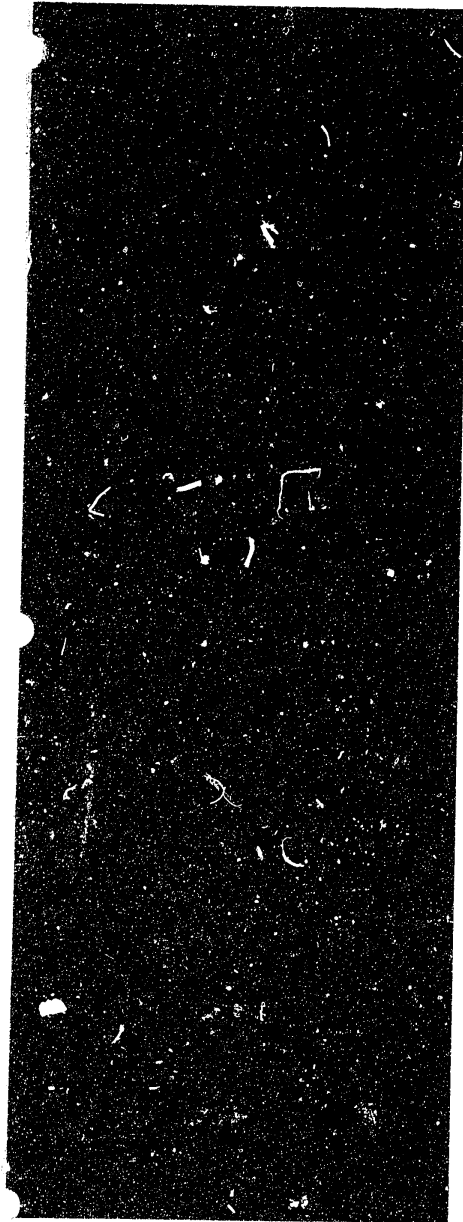
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YEMEN (SAN'A')

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Armed Forces

A. Defense establishment

The armed forces of the Yemen Arab Republic (Y.A.R.) consist of an army of about 30,000, an embryonic naval force of about 250 men and five operational small craft, and an air force of about 700 men and 27 aircraft. Paramilitary forces, under the Ministry of Interior, consist of the Central Security Force and the Office of General Security. These combined forces total about 4,300 men. In addition, there are the Zaydi tribal forces who have a paramilitary capability, with strengths rarely exceeding a few thousand. (S)

The armed forces are charged with maintaining internal security and defending the country against foreign aggression. The armed forces of Yemen¹ are marginally capable of maintaining internal security, but they would be unable to offer significant resistance to the forces of a major power or to conduct successful offensive operations against neighboring countries. The armed forces have been unable to protect Yemen's southern border from forays by P.D.R.Y.—known as Yemen (Aden)—forces. (S)

The main external challenge facing the military establishment is the threat from the radical P.D.R.Y. Government. Most military leaders would like to commit their forces, in conjunction with anti-Aden tribal forces and dissident groups, against the Adeni regime. Past attempts along these lines indicate such ventures are not likely to be successful. Civilian officials are divided on the subject, with President Iryani strongly opposing any such move. (S)

Lack of greater combat effectiveness is due primarily to obsolete equipment, which has been further degraded through inadequate maintenance, lack of spare parts, and the absence of an effective training program. The armed forces have been

¹The word Yemen refers to the Yemen Arab Republic (Y.A.R.), or Yemen (San'a'), not to be confused with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (P.D.R.Y.), or Yemen (Aden).

completely dependent on Warsaw Pact countries, primarily the U.S.S.R., for military aid and advisers. The Soviets, who also support the competing Yemen (Aden) armed forces, are apparently withholding most military deliveries and spare parts, while providing greater support to the Adeni regime. Yemen's rapprochement with conservative Saudi Arabia in 1970, increased cooperation with Western countries such as West Germany, and the resumption of relations with the United States in July 1972 have undoubtedly contributed to the decrease in Soviet logistic support. Still further animosity has resulted from allowing anti-Yemen (Aden) dissident organizations to conduct insurgent operations from Yemeni territory. Current and near-term military aid from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Libya will not be sufficient to replace the Soviet assistance if it is terminated. (S)

Although the oversized standing army can rely on numbers to maintain internal security, except along the southern border with Aden, any major offensive operations would be severely restricted because of the lack of spare parts, especially in the armored units. The naval force has no combat capability and rarely conducts even short-range patrols. In the past, the air force has demonstrated its capability to bomb stationary targets and provide limited support to ground units; however, because of its complete reliance on Soviet equipment, it too is plagued by the shortage of spare parts. The U.S.S.R. has supplied early warning and ground control intercept radar to Yemen, but no effective air defense system exists. Air defense capability is limited to army antiaircraft units and tribal forces familiar with light antiaircraft weapons that were employed during the republican-royalist civil war of the 1960's. (S)

No formal military alliances are known to exist; however, Yemen has concluded technical and military assistance agreements with the U.S.S.R., Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, People's Republic of China, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Egypt. From the beginning of the republican regime in September 1962

until 1967. Egypt exercised considerable influence over Yemeni governmental affairs. In response to the unsuccessful royalist attempt to overthrow the republican government, the Egyptians sent to Yemen an expeditionary force, which reached a maximum of about 60,000. (C)

1. Military history

Following independence from the Turks in 1918, Yemen's rudimentary armed forces evolved into their present structure under guidance, training, and arms provided by a variety of foreign powers, including the United Kingdom, Turkey, Sweden, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Czechoslovakia, and the U.S.S.R. (U/OU)

The army is essentially an outgrowth of the tribal levies that functioned as little more than a palace guard for the Imam up to the revolution of September 1962. In that revolution a group of Zaydi army officers, headed by Col. 'Abd Allah al-Sallal, were able to obtain extensive foreign support, notably from Egypt, and overthrew the regime of Imam Badr. From that date the royalists fought against the republican forces. By 1964 the republican army, supplemented by recruiting, was formed into five nonstandard brigades under Soviet and Egyptian tutelage. Despite extensive Egyptian aid, the royalist forces remained in control of the highlands while the republicans maintained a hold on the coastal lowlands. (U/OU)

When the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war began, the Egyptians withdrew some troops and equipment from Yemen. In August 1967, at the Khartoum Conference, Saudi Arabia agreed to cease its assistance to the royalists in return for Egypt's promise to recall its forces from Yemen. As the last Egyptian troops were evacuated in December 1967, the royalists again seized the initiative, capturing most of the northern, eastern, and central parts of the country. During the first 2 months of 1968, the royalists laid siege to San'a', the capital, but failed to capture it. The reasons for failure were primarily twofold. With the Egyptian troops no longer in Yemen, many of the royalists lost much of their zeal for fighting. Others questioned the benefits in restoring the Imamate in spite of Imam Badr's promises of reforms. In 1970, Saudi Arabia recognized the Y.A.R. and terminated all aid to the royalists. (U/OU)

The army was further built up under the guidance of former Prime Minister Lt. Gen. Hasan al-Amri, who again became the Prime Minister for a short time in 1971. He was forced to resign after less than 2 weeks in office after he murdered a Yemeni civilian in a private quarrel. Since late 1971, the armed forces have

been under the control of the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Col. Muhammad Iryani. (U/OU)

Although the navy's official birthday is celebrated as 23 October 1964, the Y.A.R. received two small craft from the U.S.S.R. in September 1962. The Egyptians provided training during the 1960's, and the Soviets may still be providing assistance to the small navy. However, the navy's standard of efficiency remains low, and the vessels are rarely utilized. (C)

The air force had its inauspicious beginning in 1927, when six Yemenis received pilot training in Italy and returned to Yemen to fly Italian-made fighter aircraft. Within weeks, four pilots were killed in aircraft accidents. The remaining aircraft were never again flown. Relatively ineffective efforts by Swedish pilots to organize an air force in Yemen took place in 1952, and subsequent attempts by the U.S.S.R. in the waning days of the Imam's rule, and again in 1965, produced no substantive results. Although a few Yemeni pilots were trained in the U.S.S.R. during 1965, their aircraft were commandeered by Egypt and later evacuated with Egyptian forces in December 1967. To help stave off a republican defeat by the royalists in late 1967, the U.S.S.R. provided injections of Soviet-built aircraft, including MiG-17's and Il-28's. Syria provided most of the pilots for the republican air force. Other pilots were Iraqis, Yemenis, and probably Soviets, who confined themselves to advising after a Soviet pilot was reportedly shot down in December 1967. (S)

In October 1971, a sizable Yemen (Adeni) force composed of army and paramilitary units penetrated 25 miles inside the Y.A.R. at Balaq and successfully attacked about 1,200 dissident tribesmen who were attempting to overthrow the Adeni regime (Figure 1). The attack was supported by MiG fighters and was not opposed by regular Yemeni forces. The border situation subsequently eased somewhat, but in February 1972, the killing of 65 Y.A.R. tribal leaders, including the paramount Sheikh of the Y.A.R., led to a renewal of tension. Both governments began preparing for war. (S)

In July 1972, the Y.A.R. Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces declared that the San'a' government would recover the northern area of Harib on the ill-defined border, which was being occupied by Adeni forces. Tensions continued to rise. The focal point of opposition to the Adeni regime was the National Unity Front (NUF), a Saudi-supported fragile

*For diacritics on place names see the list of names at the end of the chapter



FIGURE 1. Desert tribesmen carrying supplies to be used against the Yemen (Aden) armed forces (C)

coalition of dissident groups, and exiled P.D.R.Y. tribesmen. An ultimatum was finally delivered by the Saudi Arabian leadership and by Libya's Colonel Qadhafi for the NUF to produce positive results or further aid would cease. Many of Yemen's military and civilian officials also agreed that the time was ripe to topple Aden's radical regime. Fighting began in early September 1972 when dissidents directed attacks into the P.D.R.Y. Subsequently, NUF units began concentrated attacks around the P.D.R.Y. post of Kirsh, using artillery and Saladin armored cars supplied by Libya. Meanwhile, an independent force under the command of exiled Yemen (Aden) Forces Commander Husayn 'Uthman 'Ashal crossed into the P.D.R.Y., attacking positions south of Qa'tabah. (S)

Adeni officials were convinced that the attacks were the forerunner of an invasion by combined NUF, tribal, and Y.A.R. regular forces. Except for supplies received from one of the army brigades, no official Y.A.R. support had been given to the dissident groups. On 26 September, P.D.R.Y. forces, using tanks and artillery, counterattacked and occupied Qa'tabah.

However, they withdrew shortly after receiving word that Y.A.R. regular forces were heading for the town. (S)

By mid-October, in addition to the 10,000 army troops deployed along the border, an estimated 100,000 tribesmen were massed throughout the southern area of the Y.A.R. Tribal, NUF, and military forces attacked P.D.R.Y. airfields and border towns. However, the success of these forays was brief. A series of cease-fires were arranged by the two Yemens' prime ministers, and Aden's armed forces began systematically recovering their territory. For lack of any command and control among the regular, dissident, and tribal forces from the north, and in addition to the rapid depletion of ammunition and spare parts, the poorly planned invasion was a failure by 22 October. Although an agreement was reached in November 1972 to unite the two Yemens, real merger is unlikely. After the hostilities, San'a' retained control of Kamaran Island, which NUF personnel had seized with little difficulty; Aden's troops occupied small enclaves of Y.A.R. territory; and border skirmishes continued. (S)

2. Defense organization (S)

National defense policy in Yemen is determined by the three-man Republican Council under the leadership of President 'Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani. In September 1971, the President, through the issuance of a republican decree, assumed the title of Supreme Commander. Control over the armed forces was formerly exercised by the Republican Council through the Armed Forces Deputy Supreme Commander, Col. Muhammad al-Iryani, a nephew of the President. However, in November 1972, Deputy Prime Minister Col. Ibrahim al-Hamdi resigned from office as a demonstration of the withdrawal of confidence by the military over Prime Minister 'Ayni's accommodating policy towards Aden. Hamdi was subsequently appointed Deputy Commander of the Armed Forces, and Colonel Iryani was promoted to Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces (Figure 2). In spite of this reorganization at the highest levels, the President still holds the title of Supreme Commander. All senior military appointments and promotions are made by the President in the name of the Republican Council. The Minister of Interior, Col. 'Ali Sayf Khawlani, also selected by the Republican Council, administers control over the police and Central Security Force.

In early September 1972, with President Iryani's consent, leading military, civilian, and tribal leaders met to form a new decisionmaking body called the

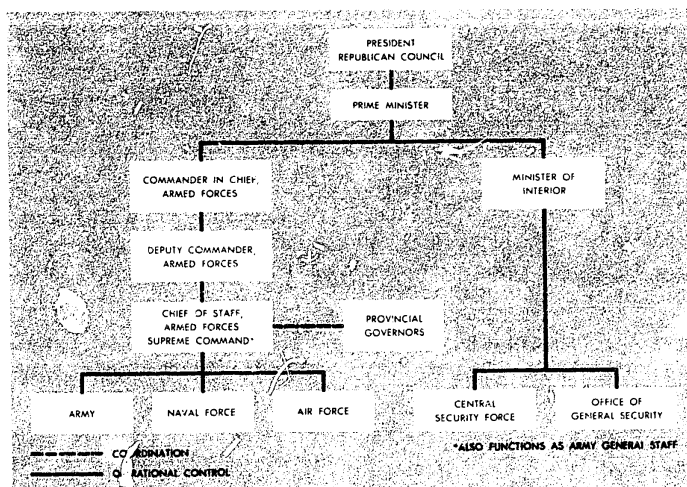


FIGURE 2. Yemeni defense organization (C)

Supreme Council for the Defense of the State (SCDS). It is an 11-man council that is to represent more accurately the three *de facto* centers of power in the Y.A.R.—the tribes, the military, and the Republican Council. Membership includes the President and the Prime Minister. It is expected that it will take stronger and more decisive positions than those taken by former Prime Minister Ayni on important issues such as the Yemen (Aden) question and military preparedness.

The Supreme Command, a joint staff, directs the interservice activities of the army, navy, and air force, of which the army is the dominant service. Headquartered in San'a', the Supreme Command is headed by Lt. Col. Husayn al-Maswari, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. With the exception of the two air and naval force billets in the Supreme Command organization, all staff positions are filled by army officers who also are members of the army's general staff. Orders are ordinarily issued by the Commander in Chief or his Chief of Staff, but President Iryani has occasionally issued direct orders.

3. Military manpower (S)

Statistical reporting from Yemen is scanty and unreliable. It is difficult to ascertain accurately the number of males in the population by age bracket. It is estimated that as of 1 July 1972, Yemen had about

1,470,000 males in ages 15-49, of whom about 53% were physically fit for military service.

AGE	TOTAL NUMBER OF MALES	MAXIMUM NUMBER FIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE
15-19	310,000	185,000
20-24	271,000	150,000
25-29	238,000	130,000
30-34	202,000	105,000
35-39	175,000	85,000
40-44	149,000	70,000
45-49	125,000	55,000
Total, 15-49	1,470,000	780,000

The armed forces do not have a military conscription law, although one is in the process of being prepared. Many volunteer for military service to avoid the insecurity present in the economically unstable country. The chief of staff, Lt. Col. Husayn al-Maswari, has stated, "If a military service law existed, many problems concerning training and development would be solved. We would then be able to demobilize many units and to bring in new soldiers for duty. All the soldiers would remain on reserve." About 50,000 males reach military age (18) annually. However, observers have noticed that some Yemeni soldiers look only about 15 years of age.

Widespread illiteracy and the generally low technical aptitude of the average Yemeni inhibit the

growth and professionalism of the armed forces. Discipline is lax, and morale is poor. Tribalism and a military hierarchy, often unresponsive to the logistical requirements and comfort of the troops, are divisive factors which impair the efficiency and combat effectiveness of the services. Although several abortive coup attempts in the army and the desertion of 11 air force pilots took place between December 1971 and April 1972, the armed forces currently appear loyal to the regime.

4. Strength trends (S)

The strength of the regular Yemeni Armed Forces has rapidly risen to about 30,950, following an initial increase to somewhat over 9,000 personnel after the Egyptian withdrawal in December 1967. Army leaders apparently believe that a force of this size is needed until such time as a reserve force is created. The navy has continued in an essentially inactive status for at least 5 years, while the air force is gradually reorganizing and expanding.

5. Training (S)

Subsequent to the withdrawal of Egyptian cadres near the end of 1967, virtually all training in the armed forces has, until recently, been under the administration and guidance of Soviet instructors. A group of Soviet military experts first arrived in the late 1950's to train the army in the use of Soviet arms. Training assistance has since expanded; however, with the establishing of relations with Saudi Arabia, and the falling out with the Soviet-favored Yemen (Aden) regime in May 1972, the Y.A.R. may have suspended all future officer training in the U.S.S.R. There are an estimated 80 Soviet military advisers in Yemen; this number, however, may be declining.

A small contingent of Syrian Air Force advisers departed during 1968, but the deterioration in relations with the Soviets has once again prompted a rebirth of Arab advisory assistance to Yemen. Of the 21 Syrian advisers in Yemen, 15 are attached to the air force. Saudi Arabia is also extending training assistance on a small but growing scale. The fact that any training is being provided is evidence of the improved relations between the Y.A.R. and Saudi Arabia. Such cooperation would have been unthinkable several years ago when hostility between the two countries led to border clashes, bitter denunciations, and political intrigues. Other Middle East countries are expected to extend training assistance in the future.

Individual training is severely hampered by the low educational level of the Yemeni soldier. Being a

volunteer force has generated certain stagnant characteristics. The Armed Forces Chief of Staff stated: "We have neither education for our soldiers nor military service regulations. We all know that we have units which are 8 years old, which have existed since then and have learned the art of limited warfare. They have potential and qualifications, and to some of them nothing more can be added." In late 1971, the Supreme Command was considering several projects to diversify and develop educational programs in the military colleges and was also considering the possibility of opening new military schools.

In view of the almost nonoperational status of the navy and the limited air force capability, virtually no joint service training has taken place. The air force has, however, provided occasional support to regular army and tribal forces during combat operations.

6. Military budget (C)

The Y.A.R. does not publish a military budget. However, it is estimated that from 1968 to 1971 the country's annual outlay for military purposes ranged from 47% to 58% of total current expenditures, or about US\$9 to 14 million. The high level of defense spending, brought about by the civil war between the republican regime and the opposing royalists, has continued into the postwar period in an effort to maintain the country's internal security.

7. Logistics (S)

Yemen's primitive economy has changed little over the years, and the bulk of the population remains dependent on subsistence agriculture for a livelihood. The country is not able to produce military equipment, relying entirely on foreign sources. In addition, Yemen is unable to finance its current level of military operations from domestic resources. Outside financial support—chiefly from the U.S.S.R. in recent years—has been required. The U.S.S.R. has been the leading supplier of materiel, providing equipment with an estimated value of US\$77 million, including infantry weapons, ammunition, field and antiaircraft artillery, tanks, armored personnel carriers, and radar; all of the country's naval vessels and aircraft. Yemen has also obtained tanks, self-propelled assault guns, and other material valued at \$31 million from Czechoslovakia; a large quantity of small arms from the People's Republic of China; and armored personnel carriers, tanks, and small arms valued at \$6.4 million from Egypt.

Although most major items from the U.S.S.R. were delivered in 1969, one radar was apparently received

in 1971. In December 1971, President Iryani went to the Soviet Union and the Soviets reportedly agreed to provide additional military aid. However, no known deliveries have been made under this accord. The lack of continuing supplies, especially spare parts, has seriously affected the combat capability of the army and the air force. Because of its almost total reliance on Warsaw Pact countries for equipment, future aid from other countries, such as Saudi Arabia, will have little effect on repairing and maintaining Yemen arms.

The organization of the logistical system is obscure and appears haphazard. The Supreme Command's Department of Supply controls procurement of supplies and equipment. The graft and corruption within the government is no better illustrated than in the armed forces where arms and even major items of equipment are often stolen and resold.

B. Army (S)

The Yemen Arab Republican Army is the country's primary military force. Its missions are to provide territorial defense and maintain internal security. The army's ability to accomplish these tasks is hampered by obsolete equipment, the lack of spare parts, poor training, and tribal and political infighting. The army is incapable of resisting a major power. Similarly, any attempt to conduct significant offensive operations against neighboring states, of which the most likely is Yemen (Aden), would be thwarted by a lack of logistical capability.

With the termination of hostilities against the royalist forces in 1970, the army had a marginal and improving capability to maintain internal security. Whereas in the past, Zaydi tribal auxiliary units frequently bore the brunt of the fighting in areas of tribal dissidence, now army units are deployed to maintain order. In October 1971, some 3,000 troops conducted an apparently successful military campaign in southern area of the Y.A.R. against antigovernment elements who had received support from Yemen (Aden). However, although the army played a limited role in the border war of the fall of 1972, it did demonstrate that the army is incapable of conducting an effective offensive operation into another country. Lacking a positive logistical capability or comprehensive training program, the army's only advantage in mounting any operation against the P.D.R.Y. would be the sheer numerical superiority of its force. It would also require support from a significant number of Yemeni tribesmen. The fall fighting, however, was all too characteristic of separate forces acting as individual groups without any meaningful coordination of plan of attack. Defensively, the army would be

in a slightly better position because the experience it gained in waging a guerrilla war for 8 years. The army would also be aided by tribal forces (Figure 3), who in addition to their knowledge of the terrain, would offer some elementary air defense capability, being familiar with antiaircraft weapons that were used in the civil war. The army has not been able to protect its southern border from attacks by Aden's regular and paramilitary forces who have usually retaliated against anti-Adeni insurgents operating out of bases in the Y.A.R.

The major factor inhibiting the capability of the army is its continuing dependence upon the U.S.S.R. for virtually all major military logistical support. The near total cutback in Soviet weapons and equipment deliveries has adversely affected the army. By withholding spare parts, the armored units have been particularly hard hit. Supply stock levels are generally low, and armor, artillery, and vehicles are in need of major maintenance and overhaul or replacement. The training program, aided by a decreasing number of Soviet advisers, is inefficient, haphazard, and hampered by widespread illiteracy.

The danger to the central government from subversion in the army is always present; currently, however, there is no evidence of serious antiregime sentiment in the army. Junior officers, however, are always an unpredictable element, and the army has had a history of plotting and coup attempts. In most cases, the dissidents have been Shafi'is who, as a religious sect, feel subordinate to the dominant Zaydis.

In August 1968 Shafi'i troops in San'a' continued after a group of Shafi'i officers refused to relinquish their commands as ordered. They believed that to do so would result in the Shafi'is losing what influence in

FIGURE 3. Tribal forces with old Russian rifles (U/OU)



the government they had. After the officers refused, Zaydi troops and tribesmen were brought into the capital. By the end of the month, the rebel units were crushed and authority was restored. During this period about 1,200 people were killed, of whom 900 were from Shafi'i units.

In January 1971, the then Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Hasan al-Amri, dismissed several hundred army officers allegedly for security reasons. Again, most of the officers were Shafi'is who appeared to be in opposition to the rapprochement with Saudi Arabia.

Rightwing officers, including Colonel Iryani, reportedly began making plans to impose a military regime in mid-1971 after Prime Minister Numan resigned and several weeks had passed before a successor was named. The coup threat had dissipated by late August, however, when General Amri was appointed Prime Minister. About the same time, a leftist group of Army officers were arrested and accused of conspiring with possible Soviet and Iraqi support to overthrow the government. In December of the same year, another group of about 20 leftist army officers from an armored battalion stationed near San'a' were arrested for coup planning. The plotters had planned to take over the unit by assassinating the commander and then move against the central government.

Some of the fear of Shafi'i collusion with Aden against the Zaydi-dominated Y.A.R. Government was dispelled during the border war in the fall of 1972, when Shafi'i army units fought bravely on the side of the Y.A.R. This resulted in the central government's

placing increased trust and giving greater responsibility to some of the Shafi'i units. However, animosity between the two sects in the military still exists and can be a cause of future dissatisfaction.

1. Organization

The Armed Forces Supreme Command functions as an army general headquarters (Figure 4). The two staffs are identical, each manned with the same personnel. Lt. Col. Husayn al-Maswari is Chief of Staff for both the army and armed forces. The only difference between the two organizations is that when the staff operates as the Armed Forces Supreme Command, there is an additional billet each for the air force and naval force.

Control of combat units is exercised by corps commanders for infantry, armor, and artillery. The General Reserve Force and the Republican Guard are units unique to the army. The General Reserve Force, under the command of Colonel al-Hamdi, is a regular force, not territorial as the name implies. Its approximately 7,000 troops are loyal to the government, and the unit apparently acts as a counterbalance to the army. The Republican Guard, which has a similar role, is stationed in San'a' at civilian and military facilities.

The army headquarters maintains general and special staffs in support of the combat forces. The general staff includes Departments of Administration, Operations, Supply, and an intelligence unit called the National Organization for General Intelligence and Military Security. It is charged with all

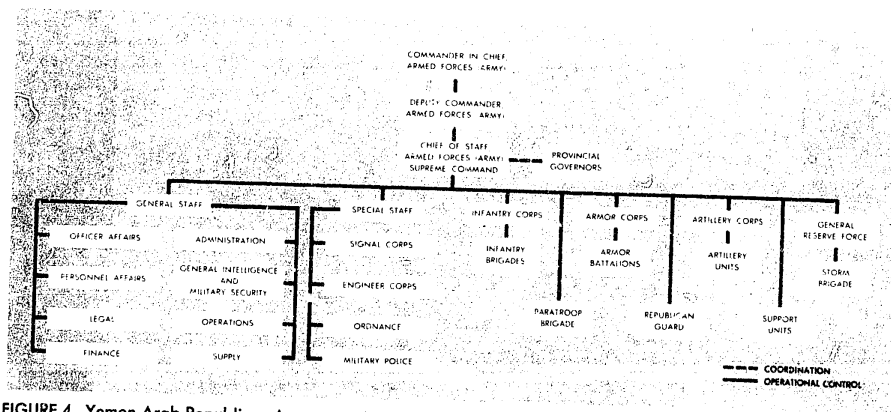


FIGURE 4. Yemen Arab Republican Army organization (S)

intelligence and security activities within the armed forces. Under the command of Col. Ahmad al-Sunaydar, there are about 600 officers and enlisted men assigned to units throughout the armed forces and controlled from 13 military intelligence offices. The special staff includes the signal and engineer corps, an ordnance department, and a military police staff.

Operational orders are usually issued under the name of the Commander in Chief or his chief of staff. There has been a significant improvement in command and control over the past 4 years. Formerly, it was not uncommon for field commanders to frequently disregard prescribed channels of communication.

The country is divided into eight administrative provinces with corresponding military commands: San'a', Al Hudaydah, Hajjah, Sa'dah, Rida', Al Bayda', Ibb, and Ta'izz. The provincial governors' degree of control over the forces in their provinces depends on both the personal influence of each governor and the level of military activity in each area. In the tense southern provinces of the Y.A.R., the governors often function as operational commanders, complete with a general staff, controlling subordinate elements. The chain of command appears to vary slightly within each province. In Ta'izz Province, a Ta'izz Brigade Command controls an infantry brigade and assorted battalions, and in Ibb Province, small area commands report to the Ibb Brigade Command. Although units are controlled by the Supreme Command or the provincial governor, there have been occasions when President Iryani has issued a direct order to an operational unit or countermanded a lower echelon order.

Since December 1971, the army has been in the process of reorganization and consolidation. Several infantry brigades, which are the largest tactical elements in the army and contain three infantry battalions and support and service units, have been merged. The quasi-independent Shock (*Al Sa'aa*) Brigade was incorporated into the Paratroop Brigade (Figure 5). The Storm (*Al Asifa*) Brigade and the Commando Battalion were merged into a new Storm Brigade which was then placed under the control of the commander of the General Reserve Force. In July 1972, Colonel Iryani further decreed that the Tenth Brigade merge with the Victory Brigade and be designated the Fifth Brigade. A new brigade, the Twentieth, has also been formed probably to satisfy the serious rivalry between two powerful tribal families.



FIGURE 5. Members of the Paratroop Brigade on parade in San'a' (C)

2. Strength, composition, and disposition³

The Y.A.R. Army has an estimated strength of 30,000 men. This figure includes from eight to ten infantry brigades. With consolidation taking place, the infantry brigades may be at their full strength of 2,200 men each.

There are major troop concentrations in or near San'a', Sa'dah, Al Hudaydah, Ta'izz, and Ibb. About 10,000 troops are stationed in the southern provinces along the Y.A.R. border. Separate armored battalions are usually allocated in support of infantry forces as the tactical situation dictates.

The army is armed with dated Warsaw Pact weapons, primarily from the U.S.S.R. Yemeni infantry soldiers are equipped with AK 7.62-mm assault rifles or SKS 7.62-mm carbines and the RPD light machinegun of the same caliber. Heavier individual and crew served weapons include 82-mm and 120-mm mortars; 37-mm and 85-mm AAA guns; 76-mm, 85-mm, and 122-mm field artillery; and 152-mm gun/howitzers. Armored vehicles include about 185 T-

³For regularly updated information, see the *Military Intelligence Summary* and the *Order of Battle Summary, Foreign Ground Forces*, both published by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

34 medium tanks and 355 BTR-40 APC's as well as 60 100-mm SU-100 self-propelled assault guns.

3. Training

There is little available information on the current status of individual and unit field training. By 1965 virtually all major Yemeni infantry units received short training courses in Egypt. Subsequent basic military training was provided by an Egyptian cadre in the Y.A.R. until its withdrawal in December 1967. Although the U.S.S.R.'s influence has rapidly declined since 1970, most subsequent training has been conducted under Soviet guidance and supervision. In 1970 and 1971, two or three Soviet military advisers were assigned to each infantry brigade and from two to five instructors to each of the various military schools controlled by the army's major corps. A few advisers were also assigned to selected battalions, including maintenance, signal, airborne, and armored units. The Soviet advisers are still in Yemen, but their numbers have decreased.

The number of Yemeni army personnel undergoing training in the U.S.S.R. in primarily technical fields has dropped abruptly from the high of 70 troops in 1970. As late as February 1972, some officers were sent to Soviet medical schools; however, as of May 1972, the Y.A.R. suspended all future officer training in the Soviet Union.

Saudi Arabia is providing limited service school training for army officers. In late 1971, 10 Yemeni officers were reportedly enrolled in a Basic Supply course at the Saudi Arabian Army Quartermaster School at At Ta'if; and 20 Yemeni officers were attending an English-language course at the Saudi Arabian Army Language School at Riyadh. In addition, the Saudi's are training the Yemeni military bands. Syria has six army advisers in Yemen, and Egypt and Iran probably will provide assistance in the future.

Identified military schools in Yemen include the Infantry, Paratroop, and Military Police schools, controlled by the army headquarters infantry corps in San'a'. The Armor, Signal, and Artillery Corps all control their respective schools, most of which are probably located in the San'a' area; there is a military academy at Ta'izz. Information on course lengths and curriculums at the various schools is not available. However, Yemeni ground forces are not generally considered to be well trained and motivated.

4. Logistics

Throughout its modern history, Yemen has been dependent upon foreign sources for virtually all items

of military hardware. Prior to 1956, the army was equipped with a heterogeneous collection of German, British, Turkish, and Italian arms. Since 1956, the Y.A.R. obtained substantial quantities of older armament from Warsaw Pact countries, primarily the U.S.S.R. but also Czechoslovakia and East Germany. Major items include T-34 tanks, BTR-40 armored personnel carriers, assault guns, field artillery, and antiaircraft artillery. Mortars, rocket launchers, and small arms have also been provided. In the 1960's, over 18,000 small arms were received from the People's Republic of China, and in 1971, an unknown amount of ammunition was also received.

However, as the Soviets have been actively supporting Yemen (Aden), the Y.A.R. has not obtained any major military items from the U.S.S.R. since 1969, with the exception of one radar. Despite President Iryani's December 1971 visit to Moscow where an agreement was reached providing the army with T-34 tanks, rockets, radar, and other military material, only token deliveries can be expected. The halting of military aid has placed a severe strain on the army's capability to maintain its equipment. The lack of spare parts has particularly affected the armor units.

Although the army has not been able to compensate for the loss of Soviet supplies, it has been turning to other sources for assistance. Saudi Arabia, when not funneling aid to Yemen (Aden) dissidents operating out of Yemen (San'a'), has supplied the army with trucks and small arms. In February 1972, the Saudi Arabian Army had completed reconditioning and converting 42 of its Spanish-built 2 1/2-ton *Barreiros* trucks as fuel/water transporters for the Y.A.R. West Germany has also provided vehicles, mainly trucks, and radio sets under a US\$300,000 aid program in 1972. Additional military aid has also been received from several other countries, including Egypt and Libya.

Arms and equipment are controlled through the Supreme Command's Department of Supply. The port of Al Hudaydah is the primary receiving point for imported military equipment. Transport battalions, now under the control of the Engineer Corps, are located in San'a' and Ta'izz and are responsible for movement of supplies to major depots in the vicinity of each city as well as to smaller depots and units in remote regions. Transport units are equipped with trucks of varying tonnage capacities and water and fuel tankers. One vehicle repair section with a mobile workshop is assigned to each battalion. The army's transportation capabilities are not adequate to meet requirements. In October 1971, when tensions with Aden were once again on the rise, a considerable

number of civilian-owned trucks were pressed into service by the government to carry army troops to the southern border areas.

One problem evident throughout the army is the lack of control over equipment and weapons. In February 1972, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, Lt. Col. Husayn al-Maswari, summed up the situation by stating: "We all witness the game played in all government apparatuses. Nor do I deny that the chaos is greater with respect to vehicles in the military sector. The armies of the world have their regulations, but we are in the process of finding ours." It is not uncommon for regular army troops to sell or trade their small arms to tribesmen; even larger weapons, including tanks, have sometimes "mysteriously" disappeared. Disciplinary action is rarely taken against the offenders.

Standards of maintenance are low because of the scarcity of repair equipment, spare parts, facilities, and properly trained personnel. There are frequent vehicle breakdowns on Yemen's primitive roads, and weapons often malfunction because of mishandling. The loss of Soviet assistance will add to the army's major logistical shortcomings.

C. Navy

The Yemen Arab Republic's Naval Force is the most neglected of the regular services. With an estimated strength of only 250 personnel and five minor surface craft, its combat capabilities are almost nonexistent (Figure 6). It has only a limited capability to perform its primary missions of patrolling the national coastline, suppressing smuggling, and assisting in the maintenance of internal security. When questioned in October 1971 about the problems which hinder the naval force's development and attainment of a sophisticated standard, Commander 'Abd al-Harim Muharram, the naval force commander, replied, "As you are well aware, our naval forces are an integral part of the armed forces. The problems include a lack of proper training, equipment, and maintenance." (S)

1. Organization (C)

From the little information available, it appears that the navy has a very rudimentary organizational structure. The Commander of the Naval Force is subordinate to the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and is a member of the Supreme Command. Al Hudaydah harbor is the site of the naval headquarters and operating base.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition¹ (S)

The 250-man naval force maintains an inventory of five small P-4 motor torpedo boats at its only base at Al Hudaydah, on the Red Sea. Four P-4's are known to have been received from the Soviet Union in 1965. For unknown reasons, two POLUCHAT-1 class patrol boats, which were received from the U.S.S.R. in the summer of 1962, have been at the bottom of Al Hudaydah harbor for some time. There have been no apparent attempts at salvage, and they are no longer considered as part of the inventory.

3. Training (S)

Training of naval force personnel has been conducted by Soviet advisers and, prior to their withdrawal from Yemen in 1967, by Egyptians. There may still be a few Soviet military and/or civilian advisers attached to the naval force. About 60 Yemeni naval personnel had, at least until May 1972, received military training in the U.S.S.R. This may have ceased because of the deterioration in Soviet-Yemeni relations.

4. Logistics (S)

The naval force has depended entirely upon the U.S.S.R. for its patrol craft and naval materiel. Minor repairs are accomplished at workshops in the port of Al Hudaydah. A small number of Soviet maintenance

¹For regularly updated information on strength, composition, and disposition, see *Military Intelligence Summary* and *Automated Naval Order of Battle*, both published by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

FIGURE 6. Naval force personnel on parade in San'a' (C)



personnel have provided assistance in the past. No bunker fuel or major repair facilities are available. The vessels are poorly maintained and infrequently operated; however, when tension with Yemen (Aden) increased in March 1972, three or four torpedo boats were being serviced and test operated in the harbor area. President Iryani's trip in 1971 to the U.S.S.R. reportedly resulted in a Soviet agreement to provide two more torpedo boats; however, none has arrived and the agreement may not be consummated.

D. Air force (S)

The Yemeni Air Force (YAF) appears destined to play only a minor role in any confrontation in the foreseeable future. Although charged with defending Yemeni airspace and providing tactical support for ground forces, the air force has no air defense capability and only a marginal ground support capability. A key factor in this lack of combat readiness is the U.S.S.R. With Soviet-Yemeni relations deteriorating since 1968, the U.S.S.R., which has supplied all of the Y.A.R. aircraft, has placed a virtual stranglehold over the air force through its control of spare parts and material aid. In addition to its logistics problems, the overall combat capability is further limited by an insufficient number of qualified pilots and trained maintenance personnel.

The air force's combat arm relies on Soviet supplied MiG-17 FRESKO fighters, MiG-15 FACA fighter/trainers, and Il-28 BEAGLE bombers. Until May 1972, most of the aircraft were covered with canvas, received little or no maintenance, and were seldom used. Many had not been flown in over a year. However, in May 1972 Al Hudaydah New airfield, the primary operating base, was the scene of increased activity. Two of the MiG's were on alert, parked on taxiways at the end of the runway. No bombs were on or near the aircraft. Three of the BEAGLES were flying and dropped single practice (live 50-100 kg) bombs on a target adjacent to the runway. The fact that the aircraft could become operational after a long period of neglect is a major accomplishment; however, were the Soviets to completely terminate spare parts deliveries, the air force would be grounded very quickly unless relief was received from other sources having access to Soviet supplies.

No formal air defense system is known to exist. The MiG-17's have not been employed in an air intercept role, and available information does not indicate that they are maintained in an air defense alert posture. BIG BAR early warning (EW) radar is located near Al Hudaydah and San'a', and KNIFE REST A EW/Ground

Control Intercept (GCI) radar unit is at Rawdah airfield near San'a'. However, any air defense capability would have to come from either army or tribal forces operating antiaircraft artillery without the benefit of electronic aids.

In the 1960's the air force had utilized both BEAGLES and FRESKOs in a tactical combat role in support of ground operations against dissident forces. Tactics were usually restricted to strikes against stationary targets. Since that time, there have only been rare instances when the MiG-17's have been used in a tactical situation and always against tribal uprisings.

The small transport fleet of Soviet-supplied aircraft has been utilized in conjunction with the Yemen Airways Corporation (YAC) to ferry troops and assist in military resupply operations. Although faced with the same problems as the air force, the YAC has proved invaluable in providing emergency resupply to areas that were under prolonged siege.

1. Organization

The Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces Colonel Iryani and his Supreme Command in San'a' exercise operational control over the air force. The air force commander, Major 'Ali Salih al-Shaybah, is a member of the Supreme Command staff in San'a', but the air force headquarters is located at Al Hudaydah. Major al-Shaybah, appointed to his present position in February 1972, is assisted by a small staff and a Soviet advisory contingent. Until 1971 all tactical elements were included in an Operational Training Unit, which has since been reorganized into three squadrons.

With combat operations being controlled by the Armed Forces Supreme Command, it would appear that any sorties capable of being launched in a support role by the air force could be coordinated with ground forces. There would be no effective coordination, however, between the air force's fighter aircraft and the army's antiaircraft artillery units.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition³

The air force has a total of 27 aircraft: two Alouette III helicopters transferred from Saudi Arabia and 25 Soviet-built aircraft, consisting of 11 Il-28's, eight MiG-17's, one MiG-15, and five transports. In October 1972, Libya provided the Y.A.R. with four of

³For regularly updated information on strength, composition, and disposition, see *Military Intelligence Summary*, *Free World Air Intelligence Brief*, and *Free World Air Order of Battle*, all published by the Defense Intelligence Agency. Information on Yemen airfields is presented in the Transportation and Telecommunications chapter of this General Survey.

its 11 Il-28's. These light bombers were formerly Egyptian owned and based in Libya. Prior to their delivery to the Y.A.R., they were purchased from Egypt by Libya. This may well have been an expression of Egyptian support for the Y.A.R. in its conflict with Aden while at the same time maintaining a low profile. The force is organized into a MiG-17 and MiG-15 fighter squadron, an Il-28 bomber squadron, and a transport squadron, which has three An-2 and two Il-14 light transports. Yemen has about 24 airfields, of which five have hard-surfaced permanent runways. Al Hudaydah New is the primary military airfield, with air traffic control under military supervision, however, only daylight operations are permitted. The bomber squadron is based there. Because of expansion and improvement being carried out at Rawdah, a joint civil/military airfield near San'a', the MiG squadron that had long been stationed there has been transferred to Al Hudaydah New. Visual flight rules apply to all airfields.

Air force personnel strength is estimated at about 700 men, including 50 pilots. Of the pilots, probably only half would be considered operationally qualified because of the lack of flying time. Personnel problems within the air force have remained unsettled. In January 1971, a plot was uncovered in which a number of young air force officers were to defect with their aircraft to Aden. This was reportedly organized by the Soviet advisers working with the air force at Al Hudaydah New airfield. In March 1972, 11 pilots deserted to Aden, leaving their aircraft behind.

3. Training

For the most part, air force training has been conducted on a haphazard and piecemeal basis. Egypt, Syria, and the U.S.S.R. have provided pilot training in the past. Currently, an unknown number of Soviet advisers and about 15 Syrians are providing assistance to the air force in Yemen. A small detachment of Soviet instructors at Al Hudaydah New airfield provides in-country basic pilot and aircraft maintenance training. These instructors have also conducted advanced training on the MiG-15, MiG-17, and Il-28 aircraft. Some Yemeni pilots and nonflying personnel have received advanced training in the U.S.S.R.; however, details on the curriculum or length of the courses are not available.

In late February 1972, student pilots were scheduled to be sent to the U.S.S.R. as soon as their basic training in the Y.A.R. was completed. However, all additional officer training in the U.S.S.R. was apparently suspended in May 1972.

4. Logistics

The air force is totally dependent upon foreign sources, particularly the U.S.S.R., for aircraft, spare parts, and all associated equipment. With relations deteriorating, the Soviet's logistical support has practically ceased. President Iryani's Soviet visit in December 1971 resulted in the air force being promised seven MiG-17's and radar units. As of late 1972, no known deliveries have been made under this accord.

The actual structure of the maintenance organization is unknown. Most maintenance is performed at Al Hudaydah New, possibly by a maintenance battalion similar to that established by the Soviets in Yemen (Aden).

The combined capability of the small air force transport fleet and civil air transport aircraft is adequate to support most emergency air supply requirements within the country. However, many civilian crew members are Yugoslavs or other third-country contract personnel who cannot be depended upon to perform under combat conditions.

In addition to Rawdah, airfield construction and improvements have taken place or are scheduled for Al Hudaydah New, San'a' South, Sa'dah New, and Ta'izz New.

The port of Al Hudaydah is the major supply depot and bulk fuel storage point for the air force. Current supply levels for ordnance, spare parts, and fuel are not available.

E. Paramilitary forces

1. Ministry of Interior security forces (S)

Charged with maintaining internal security, the Minister of Interior controls an elite paramilitary unit, the Central Security Force, and the Office of General Security, which constitutes the police force. The Central Security Force, formed in early 1967, is responsible for riot control, protection of government officials, and general security control matters. It has, in practice, been utilized to counterbalance potential antiregime elements within the army. Under the command of Deputy Interior Minister Col Muhammad Salih al-Kuhali, the 500- to 600-man force is equipped with small arms and armored cars (Figure 7). The Office of General Security is charged in general with the physical security of the country. This includes routine police work—traffic control, maintenance of checkpoints, and riot control. In late 1966, the combined strength of the Ministry of Interior security forces was about 4,300 men, of whom

1,200 were officers and noncommissioned officers.

In April 1972, Col. 'Ali Sayf Khawlani, a former army commander in 1967, became the new Minister of Interior. He has a reputation as a forceful administrator. Security forces are assisted by Soviet security advisers, who reportedly arrived in April 1971.

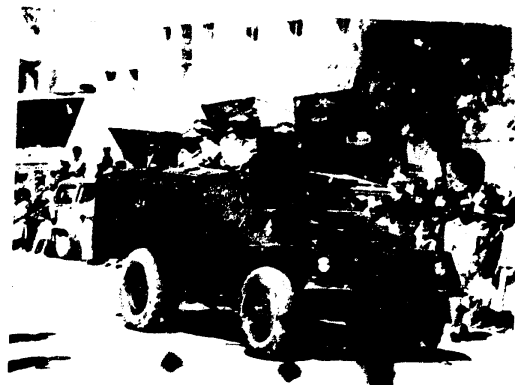
2. Zaydi tribal forces

About 75% of Yemenis consider themselves to be members of a particular tribal group; and most of the numerous tribes are members of one of two religious sects—the Zaydi (Shi'ah Moslem) or Shafi'i (Sunni Moslem). Of the two, the Zaydis, located in the central and northern regions of the country, are the more dominant because of their numerical superiority and fighting ability. (U/OU)

During the republican-royalist conflict, the Imam's army was composed almost exclusively of Zaydi tribal warriors. Since the end of the conflict, these forces have been recruited through tribal leaders by the central government to conduct specified operations in return for weapons, ammunition, money, and a share of the spoils of war. They are mercenary in character and equipped primarily with small arms, mortars, and recoilless rifles. Tribal levies strengths have varied, but rarely have they exceeded a few thousand. However, in the 1972 border war with the P.D.R.Y., up to 100,000 tribesmen were reported massed in the southern area of the Y.A.R. Although capable in

guerrilla warfare, the tribal forces' performance against the opposing P.D.R.Y. forces did not live up to expectations. The tribes were often blamed for failing to hold an objective once it had been obtained, acting as undisciplined and disorganized bands and displaying a greater interest in booty than in achieving military goals. The border war ended with the army and tribes, which began the anti-Aden campaign in September as close allies, becoming mutually hostile, each blaming the other for defeat. (S)

FIGURE 7. Central Security Force BTR-40 armored personnel carrier (U/OU)



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Places and features referred to in the General Survey (U/OU)

	COORDINATES					COORDINATES			
	°	'N	°	'E		°	'N	°	'E
Abā as Sulūd, Saudi Arabia.....	17	28	44	06	Kirsh, Yemen (Aden).....	14	37	46	15
Aq Qali.....	13	42	44	43	Maḡiq Kamarān (channel).....	15	20	42	38
Aden, Yemen (Aden).....	12	46	45	01	Maḡhaq.....	15	07	43	54
Aḡmadi.....	14	48	42	57	Manākhah.....	15	07	43	44
Al Bayḡā'.....	13	58	45	36	Ma'rib.....	15	30	45	21
Bayt al Faqih.....	14	31	43	17	Maydi.....	16	18	42	48
Al Hudaydah.....	14	48	42	57	Mocha.....	13	19	43	15
Al Luhayyah.....	15	43	42	42	Najran, Saudi Arabia (oasis).....	17	30	44	10
Al Luhayyah (port).....	15	42	42	42	Perim, Yemen (Aden) (island).....	12	39	43	25
Ar Rāhidah.....	13	20	44	17	Qa'tabah.....	13	51	44	42
Asir, Saudi Arabia (region).....	19	00	42	00	Qizān, Saudi Arabia.....	16	54	42	32
As Salif.....	15	18	42	41	Ramlat as Sab'atayn (dunes).....	15	30	46	00
At Ta'if, Saudi Arabia.....	21	16	40	24	Ridā'.....	14	28	44	53
At Turbah.....	13	02	43	54	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.....	24	38	46	43
Az Zaydiyyah.....	15	18	43	04	Rub' al Khali (desert).....	20	00	51	00
Bab el Mandeb (strait).....	12	30	43	20	Sa'dah.....	16	57	43	44
Bahrain (island).....	26	00	50	30	Salif, Ra's as (point).....	15	19	42	10
Bāḡil.....	15	04	44	17	San'a'.....	15	23	44	12
Balaq.....	15	19	45	23	Ta'izz.....	13	38	44	02
Bani al Harith.....	15	38	44	19	Tihāmah (area).....	14	03	47	55
Bani al Harith (tribal area).....	15	38	44	10	Uqdah, Saudi Arabia.....	14	07	43	05
Barat.....	13	35	44	39	Wādī Zabīd (wadi).....	14	09	43	18
Da'an.....	16	01	43	50	Zabīd.....	14	12	43	18
Dhamār.....	14	46	44	23	Zahrān, Saudi Arabia.....	17	40	43	30
Dhofar, Saudi Arabia (region).....	17	00	54	10					
Hadhramaut (region).....	15	00	50	00	Selected Airfields				
Hajjah.....	15	42	43	31	Al Bayda.....	14	06	45	26
Harāq.....	16	28	43	04	Al Hudaydah New.....	14	45	42	59
Harib.....	14	57	45	30	As Salif East.....	15	18	42	52
Ibb.....	13	58	44	12	Qalat Marīnāf.....	16	00	43	11
Jiblah.....	13	56	44	10	Rawdah.....	15	28	44	13
Jidda (Juddah), Saudi Arabia.....	21	30	39	12	Sadah New.....	16	58	43	44
Jiṣayn.....	16	59	44	11	Sana South.....	15	19	44	12
Kamarān, Yemen (Aden) (island).....	15	21	42	34	Sukhne.....	14	48	43	26
Khawr Kathib (bay).....	14	52	42	57	Taizz New.....	13	41	44	08

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